

Taking Care of Yourself



People who are substance dependent often do not take care of themselves. They don't have the time or energy to pay attention to health and grooming. Health and personal appearance become less important than substance use. Not caring for oneself is a major factor in losing self-esteem. To esteem something means to see value in it, to acknowledge its importance.

People in recovery need to recognize their own value. In recovery, your own health and appearance become more important as you care more for yourself. Taking care of yourself is part of starting to like and respect yourself again.

Paying attention to the following concerns will strengthen your image of yourself as a person who is healthy, abstinent, and recovering:

- Have you seen a doctor for a checkup?
- When was the last time you went to the dentist?
- Have you considered getting a new look?
- Are you paying attention to what you are eating?
- Do you wear the same clothes you wore when you were using?
- Do you need to have your vision or hearing checked?
- Do you exercise regularly?
- Is your caffeine or nicotine intake out of control?

Some people find it is easier to make sweeping lifestyle changes all at once. However, if addressing all these health and grooming issues at once is too overwhelming, work on one or two items each week. Decide which are the most important, and do those first. As you look and feel better, you will increase both the strength and the pleasure of your recovery.

The first thing I need to do to take care of myself is:
